

Using Cars to Reduce Car Use - 2

Carplus Guidance on Car Clubs and Car Sharing in Local Development Frameworks

(stand alone guidance and insert in the Carplus Guide to Car clubs in Property Developments).

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1. Introduction

“Using cars to reduce car use” may sound contradictory but car clubs and car sharing not only reduce the overall number of cars on the road but also increase use of public transport, walking and cycling. These initiatives are key tools for planners and developers to use to enable an increase in build density and a reduction in parking provision. Changing the way in which people use cars will come partly from offering attractive alternatives but also from planning our towns and cities to make sustainable travel the default option.

Carplus has produced this guidance document to encourage the inclusion of car clubs and car sharing in Local Development Framework documents. The guide aims to cover the benefits of taking this approach, and includes suggested wording and case studies for the Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Documents.

The guide is also designed for those who are involved in the consultation process of LDFs and who wish to encourage the inclusion of responsible car use schemes in their local planning policy.

Car clubs

A car club provides its members with quick and easy access to a car for short term hire. Members can make use of car club vehicles as and when they need them. All they have to do is:

- Book - for as little as half an hour at a time, using telephone or internet. The booking can be made well ahead of time or with a few minutes notice.
- Unlock - cars are located at designated parking bays in the local area and accessed using the member's smart card
- Drive – Once inside the driver enters a PIN and drives away, returning the car at the end of the journey. It is usually possible to extend the booking if necessary
- Pay - Pay-as-you-go charges include fuel and maintenance costs. A subscription charge is paid monthly or annually.

Car sharing schemes match people making similar journeys to allow them to travel together for regular commuter trips or longer one off journeys. Some schemes are national, internet-based and open to the public; others are restricted to a particular business, locality or group.

2. Carplus

Carplus is a charity which seeks to promote car clubs and car sharing alongside responsible motoring, thus facilitating a switch from private car ownership to a more sustainable approach to travel choices. Carplus works on the local scale (with individual community groups and developers), regionally (with Local Authorities) and nationally (advising on policy and promoting co-ordination between schemes).

Carplus' vision is for a society in which the benefits of the car are realised and the associated costs mitigated through the provision of vehicles when they are needed. This should be coupled and integrated with attractive, affordable public transport options and high quality infrastructure for walking and cycling.

Transport planning should take the three-pronged approach when considering car use:

1. Develop spatial planning policies that reduce the need to travel.
 2. Encourage provision of cars for what are currently car-dependent journeys (car clubs, car pools).
 3. Organise more efficient use of private cars (car share).
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3. The Environmental Benefits of Car Clubs and Car Sharing

Car clubs result in a reduction in car miles driven, with members walking or cycling more, using public transport more often or simply re-arranging how they make journeys and traveling less. Belonging to a car club makes it easier for residents to meet their transport needs without running their own car, or in some cases without owning a second car. This means people are free to choose the best option for each journey. Research in the UK and overseas has found significant changes in travel behaviour once the link between car use and car ownership is broken. Car club members typically drive less and make more use of public transport, cycling and walking.

In the UK, former car owners increase their use of non-car transport modes by 40% after joining a car club. Two-thirds of those who owned a car before joining saw their mileage fall, by an average of around 25%.

ECI, University of Oxford 'UK car clubs: an effective way of cutting vehicle usage and emissions?' Matthew Ledbury 2004

(Further evidence see <http://www.carplus.org.uk/carclubs/env-bens.htm>)

Car sharing reduces the number of single occupancy vehicles and thus at least halves the carbon emissions of each set of car sharers. There has been some debate about whether encouraging people to car share might take them away from using public transport, in a number of academic papers. Research by Liftshare.com shows 57% of car sharers have switched from being a solo car driver, compared to 25% who were previously public transport users. Some of these are temporary car shares during train strikes etc, (the remaining 10% have switched from one car share to another, a further 7% were previously unable to make the journey). The recent Department for Transport (DFT) [Smarter Choices Report](#) says that car sharing can help people with the transition from private sole-car use to using public transport.

60% of car drivers would be willing to share a car to work if there was someone suitable to travel with.

Reed employment agency

The average car commuter drives 19 miles a day. Cutting that by half through car sharing would save 648kg of carbon dioxide over one year.

Environment Agency

Car sharing reduces the number of commuter cars at peak times thereby improving traffic flow which helps cars to run more efficiently and reduces the build up of local pollution.

On the Leeds HOV lane, the journey times of those travelling in shared cars decreased by 3.5 minutes and those travelling in the non HOV lane saw a decrease of 1.5 minutes. The buses also reported significant reductions in journey times.

Leeds City Council HOV Information Sheet

4. The Benefits of Car Clubs and Car Sharing to Planning Policy

Car clubs and car sharing schemes provide a means to reduce parking ratio provision in new developments and retro-fit developments such as Home Zones. Each car club car typically replaces 6 private cars' as residents convert from using owning a first or sometimes second car.

By reducing or eliminating the need for onsite parking many new developments are made possible and their traffic impact curtailed. A car club can unlock the potential of sites which have been neglected due to a lack of suitable parking. Alternatively land not used for parking can be made use of for alternative development (green space, play areas or extra units).

See Carplus leaflet [Car Clubs for where people live](#).

Car Clubs and Car Sharing in Government Policy

In 2004 the [Department for Transport guidance on formulating Local Transport Plans](#) stated that:

*“Re-thinking car use can help to promote essential mobility, whilst simultaneously reducing dependence upon the private car as the default journey option. As part of an integrated package of complementary measures, car management strategies can help to considerably reduce the environmental, financial, and health costs of private motoring. Car management schemes such as **car clubs and organised car share schemes** can be designed into related policy and planning and facilitated by local authorities. They can be integrated into broader sustainable transport planning, as well as complementing other policies such as workplace travel planning, creating home zones and granting permissions on new residential developments”.*

19 authorities have included car clubs in their LTP document and more than 50% support the development of car sharing schemes.

Government support for car clubs and car sharing in closed communities is found in:

- [Making car clubs and car sharing work – a good practice guide](#). DFT 2004
- [Making Residential Travel Plans Work - Good practice guidelines](#) DFT 2005

Car clubs and car sharing are listed in the measures to be considered in a residential travel plan. The guide states that “*For most residential travel plans a car club is likely to be a key component and an important corollary to parking restraint.... In this way car clubs can make it feasible for households to forego a second car, if not a first one.... Developers can be required, as part of a section 106, to ‘use all reasonable endeavour to establish the car club’.*”

The prelude to LDFs, the Regional Spatial Strategies have also paved the way for the development of responsible car schemes. The Yorkshire and Humber RSS due out in Autumn 2007 is expected to support the development of car clubs and car sharing. Where explicit mentions have not been made there is a consistent desire to increase the density of development and reduce the traffic impact. Car sharing and car clubs are increasingly being seen by many regional and local authorities as a means of achieving these aims.

6. Why include Car Clubs and Car Sharing in LDFs

One of the key aims of the Local Development Framework as set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 is to ensure that documents are prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development. PPS12 outlines the themes to be used for monitoring sustainable communities as those identified in the Egan review including environment, housing and built environment, and transport and spatial connectivity. “[Local Development Framework Monitoring - A Good Practice Guide](#)”, breaks down these themes for the purpose of monitoring into a table of the LDF core output indicators,* including:

- the density of new dwellings built
- the accessibility of residential development to key services by public transport.
- the parking standards of non residential development

<p>*TABLE 4.4 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CORE OUTPUT INDICATORS BY KEY POLICY THEMES</p>
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<p>Housing</p>

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of new dwellings completed at:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- less than 30 dwellings per hectare;- between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare; and- above 50 dwellings per hectare. |
|---|

<p>Transport</p>

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car-parking standards set out in the local development framework.• Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre. |
|---|

Car clubs and car sharing help increase densities of developments by reducing the need for parking and reducing the traffic impact from new homes. Offering residents an attractive, convenient alternative to private car ownership **encourages more use of public transport, walking or cycling**. This in turn increases the viability of public transport schemes.

Car club and car sharing schemes reduce the need for parking at employer’s sites and offer an alternative to lone car commuting. If car club vehicles are available

for business trips from the office staff, no longer need to drive their own cars to and from work.

Car club unlocking potential of complementary transport in a workplace travel plan

“... but I need to drive to work as I need my car for my job”

This is a common statement in workplace travel plan surveys. Most of those who use it to justify driving to work do not use their car for work every day. If a pool car was made available for work purposes, then this statement of justification becomes invalid. This provides a strong lever in the implementation of the travel plan, especially for the measures proposed for commuting. Whereas most travel plans rely on voluntary take-up by employees, the removal of the need to use private cars for work purposes unlocks the potential of the other transport options for commuting to work. It also allows the employers to re-address the issues of the real costs of workplace parking.

Many employers have done away with car pools, often due to issues of cost. In the new agenda of travel planning, a workplace car pool which doubles as a car club could be a popular and viable way forward. It can work like a traditional car pool, but the vehicles made available to the employees (or even local residents) for private use at evenings and weekends, providing a new income stream. Alternatively, an employer could buy-in to a car club in its local area (or be a partner in setting one up) in order to access the club cars for a works pool. Edinburgh City Council has first call on a number of the *Edinburgh City Car Club* cars for this purpose, and other businesses have become corporate members of a number of other car clubs around the country.

Setting down the support for the idea of car clubs and car sharing in the LDF will provide a mechanism for securing the support of key partners such as developers, housing associations and business. Inclusions in Supplementary Planning Documents will indicate to developers that investment in a car club or car sharing scheme could be one option they may be required to explore as a means of reducing parking and traffic in order to secure planning consent. Equally where SPDs on travel planning provide guidance on the benefits of car clubs and car sharing, it shows partners that the local authorities seek their development where appropriate.

7. Inclusion in the Core Strategy

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document should draw on any strategies of the local authority and other organisations that have implications for the development and use of land e.g. Local Transport Plan and implement the spatial and transport policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Where car clubs and car sharing are already included in other policy documents this should be cross referenced in the Core Strategy. However even without this precedent it may be beneficial to provide a short paragraph outlining the support for these schemes and how they will enhance sustainable development in the area, under chapters on transport and / or low-car developments.

In cases where the Core Strategy is already completed reference to car clubs and car sharing schemes may be sought at the time it is revised.

Kirklees Council in West Yorkshire is including car clubs in its Core Strategy to be finalised in 2007. This guide will be updated with case study references as they become available.

8. Inclusion in Supplementary Planning Documents

Many local authorities have had reference to car clubs and car sharing in their **Supplementary Planning Guidance** – before they began the process of creating Supplementary Planning Documents.

SPDs provide practical detail on implementing the policy framework outlined in the Core Strategy. Each local authority will have a different list of SPDs depending on the local issues and how topics are divided. Car clubs and car sharing will fit into SPDs in different ways depending on which approach the authority takes. The following section provides examples of how responsible car use schemes can fit into different types of SPD. The majority of the examples are from SPGs that have yet to be updated in accordance with the requirements of the new LDF system

The SPDs which could make reference to car clubs and car sharing include:

- Low car housing
The London Borough of Islington has included car clubs in its Reduced Car Housing SPG:
*“In addition developers in large schemes may be asked to contribute to:
a) the provision or contribution towards the development of ‘car club’ facilities for residents;*

- Developer contributions
Bristol City Council has included car clubs in its SPD 4 – “Achieving Positive Planning Through the Use of Planning Obligations (October 2005)” which is part of the Local Development Framework. It says:

“(viii) Site Specific Measures

Definition

Site specific measures are those obligations required from a particular development which relate specifically to matters not covered through formulae based financial contributions or on site provision. Examples could include:[...]

- Funding towards the costs incurred in setting up a Car Club, where a residential development that proposed little or no off-street parking is located in an area where there is limited on-street availability.”

- SPDs specifically for car clubs
The London Borough of Sutton has a SPD which is specifically for car clubs. It looks at all aspects of how the developer can support the process of setting up a car club and the conditions for success. This document is currently being revised and the draft version is open for consultation from 30th Jan 2007.
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/environment/suttondevelplan/supplanningguide.htm>

Exeter City Council also has a SPD focusing on car clubs alone.

- Sustainable Transport
An alternative location to address car clubs and car sharing is in a SPG on Sustainable Transport. This is the approach the London Borough of Merton has taken. In reference to car sharing it says:

“The Council considers that the main objective (of a travel Plan) should be to reduce reliance on the private car by encouraging the use of more sustainable modes or to encourage more efficient use of the car (eg by car sharing).

➤ **Travel Plans**

Leeds City Council intends to include information/ details on car clubs and car sharing and their potential for use in new developments in the draft SPD on Development Contributions and Travel Plans currently in preparation. It is intended to highlight those types of new development where car clubs could be considered as one of the measures in the travel plan “toolkit” which would help deliver more sustainable patterns of development.
(Text not currently available)

9. LDF Consultation

A key objective of the new planning system is to strengthen community involvement. Statements of community involvement, to be produced by planning authorities, will set out how communities will be engaged in the preparation and revision of local development documents and consideration of planning applications.

Local authorities are encouraged to use a wide range of methods to gather feedback on each set of documents as well as making them all easily accessible on the internet. Typical plans for community involvement will include: public meetings, facilitated discussion meetings, individual meetings with stakeholder groups, written consultation, exhibitions, workshops and steering/advisory groups.

Plans for consultation and the documents themselves will all be available on the authorities websites.

10. Further Guidance and Support

Carplus is able to support local authorities and developers going through this process. General advice through to site specific visits and scoping reports can be arranged as appropriate.

Carplus also recommends talking to the national car club operators for site specific advice and costs of proceeding. Contact details can be found at www.carplus.org.uk

Other Carplus Guidance:

[Car Clubs in Property Developments](#)

[Fast Track Guide to Setting up a Car Club](#)

[Car Clubs at Work](#)

[Car Sharing Reference Guide](#)

Feedback Form
Carplus Guidance in car clubs and car sharing in LDFs

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Any other comments.....

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